

Description of Happiness on The Betawi People in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan

Miwa Patnani

Department of Psychology
YARSI University Jakarta
miwa.patnani@yarsi.ac.id

Abstract

Happiness is an important thing in human life, so it's not surprisingly that people tend to do anything they could to be happy in their life. So do the Betawi people which is known as the indigenous people in Jakarta. Betawi people now facing the unpleasant reality in spite of their inability to compete with the migrants community who come and dominate the economy growth in Jakarta. This inability to compete, forces the Betawi people to move from downtown to the suburbs of Jakarta. Another impact of this inability to compete is the low level of welfare among the Betawi people, which is in turn, affects their feeling of happy. This study aimed to describe the happiness among Betawi People who lived in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan, South Jakarta. Happiness questionnaire was used to collect the data from 55 Betawi People. This questionnaire consist of some open question and some question with alternative choices. Open questions describe the definition and sources of happiness, while question with alternative choices describe the level of happiness. The result showed that the subject of this study is quitely happy. The definition of happiness answered by the subject was categorized then, and finally revealed 7 themes: relationship within the family member, something correlated with material, having a peacefull life, something really important, achieving for what they want, physical health and to share with other people. Meanwhile, categorization on the sources of happiness found 8 sources: relationship within the family, materials, giving happiness to their beloved ones, relationship with spouses, physical health, having children, success and developing Betawi culture.

Keywords: happiness, level, meaning, sources, Betawi

Introduction

It would be obvious that everyone want to be happy, and they will do anything in order to be happy. According to Sapuri (2009), all human being have the same expectation, to life in peace and happiness so that everyone should share their happiness to make other people happy. Al Ghazali (in Sapuri, 2009) said that people will get the perfect happiness only when they sincerely pray to God. It means that people should obey

to the do and don'ts according to their religion's values.

Refers to Aristoteles (William et al, 2006) happiness is a perfect condition so that everyone will try to get it. Similar to Aristoteles, James (William et al, 2006) assumed that since happiness was really important, the way to be happy is become a major attention for people all the time. Veenhoven (in Abdel-Khalek, 2006) called happiness as a life satisfaction, and defined

it as a level of one's evaluation about their own life.

According to Schimmel (2009), it was a quiet confusing terms between happiness, subjective well-being, life satisfaction and quality of life. Schimmel (2009) assumed that for the purpose of his study, those terms were used interchangeably. According to Diener (2000), subjective well-being in colloquial terms is sometimes labeled happiness. So in this study I considered happiness as the same meaning as subjective well-being. But there was a quite little differences between those terms. Happiness refers to positive emotion, while subjective well being refers to either positive and negative emotions (Diener & Ryan, 2009). Despite of the differences, both of happiness and subjective well being refer to one's evaluation about his life. Diener et al (2000) assumed that there were three components to evaluate one's subjective well-being; people's emotional responses, domain satisfaction and global judgement of life satisfaction. We can conclude then, highly subjective well being people, will have high frequency of positive affection, low frequency of negative affection, satisfied with important domains in their life and surely feel satisfied with their own life.

Happiness was not affected by certain characteristics, considering a study by Myers & Diener (1995) showed that happiness was possessed by everyone regardless their ages, sexes, culture and income. It means that everybody deserve to be happy no matter what their skin colour, occupation or their cultural values. However, Myers & Diener (1995) said

that there was a differences in happiness among the population of different countries, even though the income variable was fully being controlled. In addition, it was revealed that African American people was happier than European American.

Compared with this finding, Indonesia as a multicultural country surely have so many cultural differences, so that it would be interesting to understand happiness among those different cultures. Betawi, was one of Indonesian unique culture, said to be the original population of the capital city, Jakarta. Just like another culture, Betawi people certainly want to be happy. But, as the developing of the city, Betawi people was said to be marginalized and not able to compete with the migrants who occupied and dominated the city.

Center for Indonesian Regional and Urban Studies or CIRUS, noted from their survey that about 54% of Betawi people was categorized as poor (Al Hadi, 2012). In addition, a study by Aryanti (2011) showed that when comparing the income level between Betawi people and the migrants, it was revealed that Betawi people has a lower income than the migrants. This finding implied that Betawi people's welfare was not as high as the migrants. Surely, this condition would be the best description of the Betawi people's low welfare which lead to the unhappiness condition.

Happiness was affected by so many things which were varied in different people. According to Diener & Ryan (2009), happiness was affected by emotional intelligence, religiosity, social relation, occupation and income. It means that people who have a good emotional intelligence,

pray to God, have a good relationship with others, have a good job and income, will be the happy one. A study of Chinese in Taiwan (Lu & Shih, 1997) showed that sources of happiness were: need to be respected, interpersonal relationship, material satisfaction, achievement in work, peaceful and meaningful life, feeling lucky, control and actualization, joyful and health.

Method

Participant

This study took place in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan, located at the suburban areas of Srengseng Sawah, Jagakarsa, South Jakarta. Fifty five Betawi people who live in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan were participated in this study, consist of 43 females and 12 males, with age varied from 18 years to more than 50 years. These participants' age were mostly in range 31-40 years (42 %), and 21-30 years (19%). It showed that most of the participant of this study were on the productive ages. Most of these participants were still in marriage (93%), and only small number participant reported themselves as widow (5%) and not yet married (2%). About 35% of the participants have two children, indicated that most of the participants complied the family planning program. Female dominated in this study was shown by the percentage of occupation as full housewife (56%). Meanwhile, the male participants have varied occupation such as food seller, farmer and entrepreneur. Educational background of the participant was quietly varied.

It showed by 36 % of the participants were graduate from their high school, 31% graduated from elementary school, 27% graduated from junior high school and only 6% graduated from university level.

Procedure

Snow ball technique was used to get information about happiness among Betawi people who live in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan. Although named Perkampungan budaya Betawi, but in fact not all the habitant was Betawi ethnicity. So I started from the head of the village who was a Betawi people, then from him I was referred to another Betawi people and so on. Before the participants were given the questionnaire, I have asked for their permission. Some selected person, unfortunately, were reluctance to participate in this study, so I have to ask them to refer me to another Betawi people. Data collected by giving them the questionnaire, and then they write down their answer. Some participants gave short and brief answers, so I have to ask them to expand their answer so it could be analyzed then. For the participants who can't read, particularly in some old age participants, I read them the questions and write down their answers. Probing was needed here because some participants tend to answer in a short way.

Measures

Data was collected by using the happiness questionnaire. This questionnaire aimed to measure either happiness data or demography

data. Happiness data consist of three questions. The first question was asked about the level of happiness, which a three choices answer: very happy, quiet happy and not happy. The second one was asked about the meaning of happiness, and the participants could write down whatever their answer in a blank sheet. The last one was asked about the sources of happiness. It was possible for participants to give more than one answer to the third question. Meanwhile, demography data was informed about age, sex, marital status, number of children, education and subject's occupation.

Result

Happiness questionnaire measured the happiness level, meaning of happiness and sources of happiness. Result from this data summarized in tables below.

Table 1
Summary of Happiness Level

Happiness level	Percentage
Very happy	18%
Quiet happy	76%
Not happy	6%

Table 2
Summary of Happiness Meaning

Meaning of happiness	Percentage
Physical Health	7%
Life in peace	18%
Something correlated with material	22%

Meaning of happiness	Percentage
Relationship with the family member	31%
Achieve for what they want	7%
Something that really important	11%
To share with other people	2%
Blank	2%

Table 3
Sources of Happiness

Sources of happiness	Percentage
Giving happiness to their beloved one	14%
Physical health	11%
Relationship within family	24%
Success	5%
Relationship with spouse	13%
Material things	20%
Having children	11%
Developing Betawi culture	2%

Discussion

Majority of the participant were reported that they feel quietly happy (78%), and only 6% who considered them as not happy. We fully understand that most of people would rather place them self in the middle level, so when they asked whether they very happy or quiet happy, they would like to say that they quietly happy. In addition, according to Veenhoven (1994), a longitudinal study shown that happiness was relatively constant for short time, but not for a long time. It means that happiness in participant of the study was affected by situational factors, for example having negative affect as a result of

marital or economy problems. These problems would lead to a feeling of not satisfied with their own life. Remember that according to Diener (2000), highly subjective well-being people have low level of negative effect and have a high life satisfaction, so we conclude that negative affect and dissatisfaction with life were the indicators of unhappiness then. I think that was the reason why participant of this study tend to answer that their happiness was on the middle level.

As much as 31% of the participants have reported the meaning of happiness was related to relationship within the family. This including relationship with the spouse, children or another member of extended family. It seems that this answer was related to participants' answer to the sources of happiness question. About 24% of participants stated that the most important sources of their happiness were relationship with their family. Most of this participants said that they feel happy when they have no problems in home and all family member were life in harmony. It's not such a surprise anyway, considering that Betawi people were best known as the community who have strong values about family relationship.

Although there was a word saying that money can't buy happiness, but material things was clearly has an important role in one's happiness. This was shown by 22% of participants who defined happiness related to the material things. Also, this was supported by 20% of participants who reported that material was another important source of their happiness. It seems that, even though money is not everything, but money enabling us to meet our needs that lead to life

satisfaction, in turn, will affected our happiness.

About 18% of the participant stated that their happiness was related to peaceful life. Life in peace means that they were not in any conflict with the others. From my opinion, this answer probably related to the characteristic of Betawi people who keep the values of their culture and religion ([Ardyan, 2011](#)). Their conformity to religion, that is, Islamic values, has made the Betawi people to life in a simple and peaceful way, not pushing too hard to get materials in their life.

Sirgy & Wu (2009), conclude that happiness also being affected by a balanced life, that happened when there was a balance between survive needs (biological, safety, economic) and growth need (social, esteem, self-actualization, knowledge and aesthetic needs). Having a balanced life will help people to have a peaceful mind. This balance would never be attained when people only focus on their needs fulfillment.

Another theme that has been emerged from the participants' answers was that happiness related to something really important in life, as shown by 11 percentages of the participants. It was supported by James (Williams et al, 2006) stated that happiness was such an important thing so that people considered it as a main purpose of their life. Even though the participants didn't say exactly what happiness mean to them, but they considered it as a priority in their life. It means that happiness was an important thing and become a major purpose of their life. Many efforts then will be undertaken in order to be happy.

Achievements, was considered as a meaning of happiness to only 7% participants. It supported by the study from Uchida et al (2004) showed that in north America, happiness mostly related to individual achievement so that self-esteem was the most important predictor to evaluate one's happiness, meanwhile in east Asia, happiness was related to interpersonal relationship so one's engagement in social relation was the most important predictor to evaluate their happiness.

About 7% of the participants reported that they felt happy when they achieve for what they want. This achievement was related to achievement in workplace or achievement in studying. It also supported by 5% participants who considered success as one of their sources of happiness. It was assumed that people will feel happy when they get something that they really want, and it considered as a success for them. A study by Lu & Shih (Lu et al, 2001), showed that one of the happiness component was achievement in workplace.

About 7% of the participants said that happiness was related to physical health, their own or their families' health. It also supported by 11% participants who considered health as one of their sources of happiness. It's not surprisingly when we compared the study of Argyle et al (Lu & Shih, 1997), revealed that one of the happiness component was physical health. A study by Lu & Shih (1997) also revealed that physical health was one of the sources of happiness. Physical health seems to be a significant aspect that affected how people will enjoy their life. People with good physical health will be able to enjoy and having fun with their life, meanwhile it was

difficult for people with sickness to enjoy their life. Difficulties in enjoying life will lead people to feel dissatisfied with their life and finally make them unhappy.

To share with other people was another meaning of happiness according to 2% of the participants. To share with other referred to a helping behavior, that is, help or give an aid to somebody else. It was supported by 18% participants who said that make their beloved ones happy was one of their sources of happiness. The tendency to share happiness probably related to a fact that the participants of this study were dominated by woman. According to Crossley & Langdrige (2005), woman considered the most important sources of happiness were feeling of being loved, friendship, self-confidence, physical health, close relationship with family dan helping the others.

Another source of happiness emerged from this study was having children. It was reported by 11% of the participants. With their strong values on family relationship, Betawi people considered children as their sources of happiness. Study by Angeles (2010) reported that there was a positive relationship between having children and life satisfaction among the married couple. It means that when married couple having children, they tend to satisfied with their married and their life in general. With life satisfaction, it will easier for people to get their happiness in life.

From the discussion above, I conclude that Betawi people in Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan were quietly happy, and their happiness was mostly related to family

relationship. This conclusion have the same description as the study by Uchida et al (2004), revealed that in North America, self-esteem was the most important predictor of happiness, while in East Asia, social relationship was the most important one. Betawi people, as a part of Asian culture, of course has the same values and

considered the social relationship as the most important factor of their happiness. In Betawi people, social relationship mostly related to family relationship. It might correlate to their strong values of family relationship. It comes to our mind that, happiness belongs to all people, but its nature probably unique in different culture.

References

- Abdel-Khalek, A. M. (2006). Measuring happiness with a single-item scale. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 34(2): 139-150.
- Al Hadi, S. Y. (2012). *Kesejahteraan Warga betawi harus jadi prioritas, bukan hanya jargon!* Retrieved from <http://www.rakyatmerdekaonline.com/news.php?id=7010>
- Angeles, L. (2010). Children and life satisfaction. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11, 523-538. Doi: 10.1007/s10902-009-9168-z.
- Ardyan, D. (2011). *Kelakuan orang Betawi*. Retrieved from <http://sosbud.kompasiana.com/2011/08/15/kelakuan-orang-betawi/>
- Aryanti, D. (2011). *Analisis kemiskinan pada penduduk Betawi vis-a-vis pendatang di DKI Jakarta*. Retrieve from <http://repository.ipb.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/56669/BAB%20VIII.%20KESIMPULAN%20DAN%20SARAN.pdf?sequence=11>
- Crossley, Adam & Langdridge, Darren. (2005). Perceived sources of happiness: A network analysis. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6, 107-135. doi 10.1007/s10902-005-1755-z.
- Diener, Ed & Ryan, Katherine. (2009). Subjective well being: A general overview. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 39(4), 391-406.
- Diener, Ed et al. (1999). Subjective well being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2). 276-302. Retrieved from http://dipeco.economia.unimib.it/persona/stanca/ec/diener_suh_lucas_smith.pdf
- Diener, Ed. (2000). Subjective well-being. The Science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 34-43.
- Klassen, A.N. (2008). *The contribution of temperament to children's happiness*. Retrieved from https://circle.ubc.ca/bitstream/handle/2429/2805/ubc_2008_fall_klassen_andrea.pdf?sequence=1
- Lu, Luo & Shih, P. Jian. (1997). Sources of happiness: a qualitative approach. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 137(2), 181-187.

- Lu, Luo; Gilmour, Robin & Kao, Shu-Fang. (2001). Cultural values and happiness: An East– West dialogue. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 141(4), 477–493.
- Myers, G, D & Diener, E. (1995). Who is happy? *Psychological Science*, 6(1), 122-135.
- Sapuri, Rafy. (2009). *Psikologi islam. tuntunan jiwa manusia modern*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers.
- Schimmel, Jörg. (2009). Development as happiness: the subjective perception of happiness and UNDP's analysis of poverty, wealth and development. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 10(1), 93-111. doi 10.1007/s10902-007-9063-4.
- Sirgy, J.M & Wu, J. 2009. The Pleasant life, the engaged life, and the meaningful life: What about the Balanced life? *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 10, 183-196. doi 10.1007/s10902-007-9074-1.
- Uchida, Yukiko et al. (2004). Cultural constructions of happiness: Theory and empirical evidence. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 5, 223-239.
- Veenhoven, R. (1994). Is happiness a trait? Test of theory that a better society does not make people any happier. *Social Indicators research*, 32, 101-160.
- Williams, K, Brian; Sawyer, C, Stacey & Wahlstrom, M, Carl. (2006). *Marriages, families & intimate relationship. A practical introduction*. USA: Pearson Education, Inc.